



IN THE SPOTLIGHT

August 2008

BUTTE COUNTY LIBRARIES

Butte County Library posts record numbers!

"Expanded hours lead to busiest year ever, surpassing 30-year old record."

There are six branches of Butte County Library system: Biggs, Chico, Durham, Gridley, Oroville, and Paradise. The Library also administers the bookmobile and Books by Mail program, which circulated a record 826,821 items to 723,460 visitors in the fiscal year ending June 30, 2008. The prior circulation record of 788,979 was set in 1977-78 when the Library had 10 locations and a bookmobile, all of which were open longer hours.

Library services and many other local government programs throughout California were dramatically reduced after the passage of Proposition 13 in 1978. Thirty years later, the Library is booming once again. During 2007-08, circulation and visitor counts grew by 10% over the 2006-2007 fiscal year, aided in large part by the additional hours the Board of Supervisors funded last year.

- 107,828 people used the Library system's 47 public Internet computers (19% increase)
- 28,144 children and teens attended library programs, including the Summer Library Program, Babies Love Books, Library Playtimes, and weekly story times (24% increase)
- 11,316 people signed up for new library cards

"When economic times get tough, people turn to the library more and more, both for information and recreation," explained Library Director Derek Wolfgram. "A library card provides free access to books, movies, computers, as well as entertaining and educational activities for kids and adults. *It's the best bargain in town!*"

Just a few years ago there was a lot of discussion about whether the Internet would render libraries obsolete. Today, only about 1 in 7 visitors to the Library come in to use the Internet. "Many of our customers use technology and books together. They find out about a topic on the Internet and then use books to get deeper or more complete information," said Wolfgram.

The Library has also used the Internet to promote its own services. Approximately 1,000 visitors a day access the Library through its website at www.buttecounty.net/bclibrary. The Butte County Library website provides information about Library hours and programs, a search engine the Library's collections, and access to online databases for homework, auto repair, health information, career resources, and more.

Butte County Library's Literacy Services has also seen a steady stream of adults taking advantage of free, confidential, one-on-one tutoring through its adult reading program.

For more information about any of the Butte County Library programs and services, please call 530-538-7525 or visit the Library's website.